CHAPTER 121: HELP HIM

She wipes away her tears and pats her cheeks.
She combs her fingers through her hair, bordering on a mess as it is, and smooths out the wrinkles in her clothing.

Did her face look horrendous right now?
Puck would usually be here to comment about Emilia's appearance, but he isn't. Though, the misshapen crystal that Garfiel gave her does reassure her with its dim light.

Emilia: “...We won't be seeing each other's faces for a while.”

The crystal in her hand siphons her mana out from her fingertips.
It's an uncontracted Great Spirit, and all it's doing is resting there inside the anchor, but it still demands an incredible load of mana. Had Subaru or Garfiel spent a full day accommodating that mana drain, they may have been run utterly dry.

But even the forcefulness of this mana drain pales in comparison to Emilia's vast stores of mana.
Emilia has regained her memories, and remembered that she can use magic without a spirit's help. If she focuses her attention on her gate, she can feel the outrageous current of mana circulating through.
Emilia had been why Puck could manifest in reality. Puck would brag that it was happening using a conglomeration of ambient mana, but most likely, a large portion of the feat drew off of Emilia's unacknowledged mana stores.

All of it, so that Emilia would not have to face her forgotten memories.

Emilia: “You really are so overprotective.”

With a slight smile, Emilia raps her finger against the crystal.
Perhaps in protest, or perhaps smiling wryly, the crystal strobes its light in response.

Emilia: “...Okay. Mm, everything's fine now.”

Her mood has calmed down considerably, too.
Thinking about Fortuna or Juice made her heart sting, and should she relax her guard, she would definitely wind up crying again.

But Emilia cannot stay cowering forever.
She has things she needs to do. And they were surely things that Fortuna and Juice would expect of her, and desire from her.

She exits the TRIAL room, and heads through the stone corridor, making for the exit.
Two TRIALS remain. Overcoming the first TRIAL isn't enough to make the door in the chamber open. Most likely, she will need to complete all the TRIALS before it will.

The requirements to make the next TRIAL start are unclear. Exit and enter the tomb again? Potentially a passage of time? Either way, the TRIAL did not heartlessly start on her during her period spent crying in mourning. So it feels like re-entry is the requirement.

Emilia: “What would I do if Echidna does something mean to me? ...I think she was sooo mad at the end.”

I hate you, she said. *But I don't really hate you,* replied Emilia.
Part of that comment had been revenge against Echidna and her constant belittling of her, but considering that this witch was in command of the TRIALS, perhaps she could have used a little more self-control.

Emilia: “I wish for you to please not be too mad.”

While praying for Echidna's good behaviour, Emilia heads for the tomb's exterior. Moonlight spilling in at the end of the hallway informs her of the exit.
She instantly forgets about Echidna for now and raises her head cheerily.

That past she remembered was assuredly nothing trifling.
It still doesn't quite feel real yet, but it was definitely a huge and unshakable event which composed part of the foundations of the character called Emilia.
But for now, all she wanted was to inform the people who believed in her that she had beaten the TRIAL.
To see the person who said, *You can do it,* and tell them: *I did it.*

Squinting under the dazzling moonlight, Emilia exits the tomb—

???: “I welcome your return, Emilia-sama.”

Greeted at the square outside by Ram and her curtsey, not a single other person in sight, Emilia tilts her head.

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—We'll rewind time a little, back to when Emilia's TRIAL began.

While traversing the route to Roswaal's recuperation hut, intending to verify the guy's motives, Subaru swallows his breath and stops still.
He can tell that Garfiel, walking beside him, also has his eyes shoot open in clear shock. For him, this situation truly must be a bolt out of the blue.
Subaru had imagined some circumstances and possibilities beforehand, but even he cannot conceal his surprise. While feeling some sympathy to Garfiel, Subaru sighs at the character blocking their path,

Subaru: “I did think you'd be around... but actually seeing you makes me feel kinda defeated.”

???: “Now thert's a serprise. Goin' by what Lil' Roz said, yer got eyes enough ter see through the whole erv everything, Lil' Su.”

Subaru: “That's him anticipating too much. Seriously, how huge are his estimations of me?”

From Roswaal's perspective, where he is aware of RETURN BY DEATH—or rather, the Redos, then indeed perhaps it all looks like the doings of an omnipotent god.
But the power isn't that infallible. It provides absolutely no help in reclaiming what precious things have already been lost. That's the sort of unhappy power it is.

Narrowing her eyes, the pink-haired girl—the look-alike for Lewes who they parted with outside the tomb, one of the Lewes Meyer doubles—smiles slyly.
Subaru had anticipated her existence and his reaction only amounts to him slumping his shoulders, but Garfiel's reaction is dramatic. His eyes peel wide as he glares at the face of his grandmother,

Garfiel: “Th'hell... why th'fuck's there another granny here? There ain't more than one talkin' granny, n' th'rest'v th'fellas who got granny's face're under my orders to...”

Lewes: “Everything has its exceptions. ...Right. If we say that the Lewes Lil' Gar knows as the representative of SANCTUARY is the place's overseer, then I'd be the caretaker of SANCTUARY's faculties. A will inherited from Lewes Meyer, continuously protecting the place.”

Subaru: “Then speaking in terms of the system, you're against SANCTUARY's freedom. I thought it was weird that none of the Leweses were against liberation and goading Garfiel. So the one who secretly took that role... was you. —Lewes Omega.”

It's not Lewes who reacts to the name, but Garfiel. He glances back at Subaru, looking dubious.

Garfiel: “Ohmegah?”

Garfiel: “Hell's that, Captain. That name.”

Subaru: “When there's several of them and you don't differentiate them, it's hard to keep the Lewes-sans straight. So just for expediency, we're calling the Lewes-sans we know Alpha, Beta, Sigma, and Theta. But now there's obviously a fifth Lewes-san, OMEGA. Not thrilled with it?”

Garfiel: “No, I just mean that name's way too cool f'r th'granny... ain't fair.”

Subaru: “Basically. When there's more of you, I'll give you cool names too.”

Garfiel: “But there ain't gonna be more of me...”

It seems like Subaru's naming sense has appealed rather intensely to Garfiel. The two recognize this unexpected point they have in common while Omega sighs.

Omega: “I dern't mind whatever yer gonner call me, but yer leaving me behind ter have a happy chat. Since when have you two been such good friends?”

Subaru: “Men who trade fists with the evening sun as their backdrop are always pals. Even if comes after getting decked following a four-versus-one. Right, Garfiel?”

Garfiel: “Well yer sure got over whatever goddamn guilt yer had, Captain.”

It seems like Garfiel still cannot really agree with losing due to force of numbers, but coming from him, the jab is pretty poor. That aside, the joking around to buy time and think ends here.
Subaru faces Omega. She strokes her long hair.

Omega: “The look in yer eyes's changed. Not a kid ter drop yer guard around.”

Subaru: “This whole kid thing feels pretty fresh, not bad. Omega-san, do I have this right? You're not like the other Lewes-sans, you don't have a rotation? I really don't want to have Gamma,

Ampersand, Dollar, and Pound show up too.”

Subaru goes off listing whatever signs he can think of. Garfiel's eyes sparkle.
While Subaru consciously ignores the admiring gaze of a fourteen-year-old, Omega strokes her flat chest.

Omega: “Dern't worry. I'm the only one holdin' the role erv overseer. Without a spec'erv a doubt, I'm the last Lewes in SANCTUARY with any sense of will.”

Subaru: “Not gonna go back on that comment? Going off who I know, up to 20,000 people with the same face'll show up.”

Omega: “Now that has ter be going too far. SANCTUARY wouldn't be able ter hold us.”

His worst fears undermined, Subaru relaxes.
He furrows his brows at the calm Omega.

Subaru: “I mean it's nice that you're just telling us who you are, but... what happened? With how you've been treated like a hidden gem up till now I was thinking entirely that you'd be in the shadows. So why're you suddenly showing up now?”

Omega smiles.

Omega: “It ain't nothing tricky,”

Omega: “The peace between yer and Lil' Gar meant yer figured out I exist. Yer might not've actually got yer grips on me, but the second yer think that MAYBE SHE EXISTS, I lose. I showed up figuring I'd behave nicely to face my judgement.”

Subaru: “Saying 'face judgement' is really overstating it. ...But there has to be more to it than that, yeah?”

If Omega seriously wanted to achieve her goals, she surely could have played more of a hand. Even should Subaru's group suspect her existence, until they manage to actually find her, she remains the superior party.

Subaru: “Call it guerilla warfare or whatever, if you ever felt like being an obstacle, you could've been. And your role is being the Joker to pull that off. Roswaal's been keeping quiet about your existence this whole time, and...”

Omega: “Lil' Roz's state is part erv why I'm showing up so nicely.”

Subaru: “Roswaal's, state?”

Subaru's eyes widen. Omega shakes her head.
There's something sardonic about that attitude, and cavalier.

Omega: “Yer take a look at Lil' Roz as he holes up in his room right now, and yer'll figure out right away why I'm thinking erv just giving up. And erspecially when I was helping him as SANCTUARY's caretaker, with the idear that he'd steer the place int'er its correct form. ...Not gonna happen with *that*.”

Being that Subaru knows the other Leweses, he finds Omega's dejected remark to be rather harsh. Perhaps Garfiel interprets her comment as being strict too, for he does not interject about her unsparing opinion of Roswaal.
Omega is tasked with being SANCTUARY's manager and caretaker. It's unclear when she first got that role, but she's probably been active for much longer than Alpha and the others. Her current attitude may have been built up over all that time.
Regardless,

Subaru: “Nevermind whatever you've been doing until now, is it safe for us to think that you're not gonna get in our way any more?”

Omega: “Well, if yer follow my views on the correct steering, then I still got lotser things I'd like ter interfere with. SANCTUARY's liberation ain't what Lewes Meyer wished fer... but, times are times. If the era means that SANCTUARY stops being necessary, then my role isn't needed either. What's kept me going until now wers essentially the thought erv not wanting ter be left behind.”

Omega's voice is somewhat sad, with anxiety peeking through about her role's end. This post she has served for so long is reaching its conclusion.
Subaru doesn't know what exactly Omega feels when she reminisces on her life. While a good portion would be a sense of will and volition, perhaps there would also be a sense of liberation smattered there too.

Garfiel: “Stubborn, ain't ya. 'S a good thing t'be, granny.”

Omega crosses her arms and looks up at Garfiel as he clicks his fangs.

Garfiel: “'S same fer me. I was stubborn like yer were, granny Omega. N'my thing was even worse than yers. But th'Captain used his strength, used his numbers, n' smashed th'whole fuckin' thing apart. Was honestly thinkin' 'fuck this!'... but now I just feel damn refreshed.”

Omega: “Lil' Gar...”

Garfiel: “'S what th'Captain said. SANCTUARY losin' it's barrier don't mean that th'world we live'n's gonna be gone. SANCTUARY disappears, n' th'whole'v th'outside world becomes a SANCTUARY. 'N there, both you n' my amazin' self got things we can do.”

Omega looks down, in thought.
Her expression loses its anxiety and her brows uncrinkle. Instead she looks to be scrutinizing Garfiel's words, and he nods in satisfaction.
Subaru taps Garfiel's shoulder.

Subaru: “Garfiel, do you... have a fever or something? You are saying some super smart, super embarrassing stuff right now.”

Garfiel: “Captain. Do y'think I got th'brains t'come up with this? 80% of what I just said's comin' second hand from you.”

Subaru: “Seriously? I said that? Nononono hold on, oh crap, belated mortification.”

Garfiel gives an astonished sigh as Subaru squats down to the ground, ears red. He then faces Omega again and swings out his arm, gesturing an open path.

Garfiel: “I get what yer sayin', granny Omega. N'yer basically answered what I was gonner ask. Now's just ter question 'bout th'nefarious plot, n' showin' up in person t'see th'asshole who came up with it.”

Omega: “Anything yer want. ...Wonder what I'll do.”

Mutters Omega. Subaru hums his agreement.
Omega had been keeping her existence a secret. Not even Alpha and the other Leweses noticed her or what she was doing. Now that her role has ended, Omega can appear in public for the very first time.

Subaru: “If you go to the tomb, Ram and Alpha-san's group... right now it's Theta-san. They're waiting there. They've probably already figured out what's going on, so just go and talk with them.”

Garfiel: “They figured out what's goin' on, goddamn seriously? My amazin' self didn't figure a single thing'v this.”

Subaru: “That's 'cause your head's running a whole lap behind.”

It's actually more baffling that he didn't get an idea of it, after that past conversation. All those times where Garfiel's instinctive actions impeded Subaru's activities in SANCTUARY float through his mind.
Either way, Omega's anxiety is probably needless. Theta knows that there are many duplicates of herself, and Ram probably knows about the duplicates too. They'll accept her.
So the problem is,

Subaru: “The mastermind of the nefarious plot, a face-to-face conversation with the boss clown.”

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When he enters the room, Subaru has to wonder if he's even been here before.

Roswaal has been in this room ever since Subaru's first came to SANCTUARY. This is the room he has visited every time he has wanted to talk with Roswaal. He can even remember where all its ornamentations are arranged, and yet.

Roswaal: “Weeeeeeeeell, if it iiiiiiiiiiiiiisn't Subaru-kun. How nice of you to come. Even though you must be veeeeeeeeeeeery busy.”

Subaru stands wordlessly with his hand still touching the opened door as Roswaal glances back at him, and speaks in that untouchable tone. He gives a joking kind of shrug, which prompts Subaru's heart, for an instant, to want to think that nothing is irregular. But Subaru suppresses that thought and instead faces Roswaal.

The room is an absolute mess.
The bookcase has been overturned, and the ripped white bedsheets lie dumped upon it. The bed is broken in two, wood chips everywhere. The warlock stands in the middle of this destruction with his hands dripping blood.
Seeing the splinter-wounds on his hands, Subaru recognizes: *He just smacked the bed apart.*

Garfiel: “Captain...”

Having also seen what a wreck the room is, Garfiel takes a half-step forward, placing himself in a position where he can protect Subaru. Roswaal's abnormal state is not evoking a caution in merely Subaru.
Garfiel's golden eyes are clearly wary. He stoops his body forward, so that he can immediately suppress Roswaal should he do anything shady.

Roswaal: “Hooooooooow domesticated you've beeeeeeeecome, Garfiel.”

Says Roswaal mockingly, his lips twisting in malevolent crimson.
Keeping that smile, he closes one eye to view Garfiel only with the yellow.

Roswaal: “It's shocking how quickly you changed your tune. You're protecting Subaru-kun, which means that you've been added to his merry band of friends. Aaaaaaand that you took your will of wills, the love that you have held so long for your mother, and discarded it.”

Subaru: “Roswaal, you're wrong. Garfiel isn't allying with us because he had some change in his feelings. He's just shifted his ideas a little, and...”

Roswaal: “Thaaaaaaat is what I'm saying is superficial. You are beaten up en masse and lectured, and that's all it takes to change your stance. Your feelings are so weak that losing a fight is enough to change them. Easily altered, shoddy.”

Subaru: “Roswaal!”

It is Subaru and not Garfiel who gets enraged with Roswaal's screeds of heartless words.
After finishing the intense fight with Garfiel, Subaru came to understand a fragment of his feelings, a fragment of his mental pain. And also came to understand that it was assuredly nothing frivolous or cheap.
Roswaal cannot be forgiven for trampling all over Garfiel's feelings.

Subaru: “You take that back! You don't have any right to mock Garfiel's feelings!”

Roswaal: “Call pliant what is pliant. Call brittle what is brittle. Is there any reason to be criticised fooooooor stating facts? Your overreaction actually reinforces my statements' legitimacy. A twopenny sketch where cheap relationships try to validate cheap feelings. Truly... an offence to the eyes.”

Subaru: “—!”

Subaru moves to approach Roswaal in a rage.
But the one who stops him is in fact Garfiel. The one most wounded by Roswaal's insults, Garfiel.
Subaru can imagine how hurt he must be as he timidly turns to glance at his face.
However,

Garfiel: “Yer words ain't got a lotta punch t'em, Roswaal.”

Says Garfiel, his arms crossed in boredom and head lightly tilted.
The attitude shocks Subaru, and does the same for Roswaal.
Had this been a Garfiel from just a little while ago, he surely would have left himself to rage and snapped at those words. But he, right now, disregarded them. As if he were bathing in a warm

breeze.

Garfiel: “I ain't able t'deny that 'm full'v half-measures. 'Till this mornin' I was on yer side, n' now I'm on th'Captain's. Yer right when yer say it was a quick change'a tune.”

Roswaal: “After your perfidy toward your beliefs come the rationalizations, I seeeeeeeeee. Goodness me, it appears that the strength you've validated all this time also proooooooooves substandard in reality. Ten years... assuredly no short period of time, only for a handful of days to alter your doctrines.”

Roswaal shrugs and shakes his head. A murky emotion rises in his odd-coloured eyes as he glares at Garfiel.

Roswaal: “And that is what I'm calling cheap. If you really loved her, then your feelings would never change their form. Do you believe that your ten years, and Emilia-sama's century, can be handled so cheaply?”

Garfiel says nothing.

Roswaal: “All you did was interact with Subaru-kun for a handful of days. What could possibly happen in this time? Did you create something with him which could rival your feelings toward the one you love? Of course you didn't! No matter what you create with those at your side, it will never compare to what you feel for your love! It won't rival it! That is what it means to love someone most!”

Roswaal kicks a piece of bed which had fallen to the floor. It rebounds and flies toward Subaru and Garfiel, but strikes neither of them as it instead hits the wall behind them.
Splinters of wood rain to the ground. Roswaal's assertions make Subaru hold his breath.

—Scour away everything except what is most important.

That is what loving something meant to Roswaal.
There is nothing precious he builds outside of the one he decides on, and he finds no necessity to build up anything precious outside of that, either. His feelings toward that one thing are then ironclad, and if opportunity exists for him to bring them to fruition, he will not hesitate in the least. This is what Roswaal believes 'love' is.

The moment Subaru comprehends Roswaal's thoughts, Roswaal looks at him as if he noticed it. His yellow eye churns with the outrageous zeal of love, consuming.

Roswaal: “Do you remember the terms of our bet? The bet that you presented. Once that bet leads you to bind your greatest prepotency and become mundane, what can you do? You can do nothing. Because you... *you*, are so inferior that you can't even manage mediocrity!”

Subaru says nothing.

Roswaal: “The potential for you to be a foolproof ace exists solely because you have that power. Once you throw that away and become mundane, within a time limit you won't even be capable of floundering at ordinary par! Nobody! After living with one another, is capable of overcoming feelings engraved over time! It doesn't happen!”

Garfiel's decade of obsession with SANCTUARY and distortion of his love for his family.

Emilia's century, with a past so terrible that she wanted to forget, and guilt that she left behind.
And,

Roswaal: “A decade, a century, and my four centuries! Do you think I can tolerate for even a second that you, nobody else but this mundane you, are the one to overturn that!”

Subaru: “Because feelings never change?”

Roswaal: “Exactly!”

Subaru: “Because you've had these feelings for a long, long time?”

Roswaal: “Yes, exactly!”

Nobody can overwrite their feelings. Feelings will never, ever, change or bend.

Finally, Subaru feels that he gets it. Finally, he feels that he understands Roswaal.

Roswaal wants his feelings to be validated.
He wants to validate somebody else's feelings, so that he can believe that this is what feelings are.

And so Roswaal had wanted Garfiel to remain weak.
He wanted Garfiel to remained obsessed with his feelings, frantically protecting something that wouldn't change.

Subaru: “Seriously, how come, Roswaal?”

Feelings for one single loved one.
For the sake of validating that, Roswaal is obsessed with what others are like when they have feelings for someone.
Even though Roswaal should know better than anyone what it is for someone to feel something for someone else.

Subaru: “How come you only see the weakness of love? If you know that loving someone without end is a strong emotion, how come you only see the weak things about it?”

Roswaal: “—Because that's what I believe.”

Replies Roswaal, his voice strangled.
Incredible fury flashes through his eyes, as if he were glaring at the thing he hated most in the world.

Roswaal: “Exactly! Like how you believe in others' strength, and expect things from them! I believe that everybody remains consistently weak! They are weak, frail, minuscule people, incapable of actualizing their love for their precious one outside of merely clinging to them, that is what I believe!”

Subaru: “—!”

Roswaal: “I have gone four centuries without ever forgetting about her! The time we've spent apart is infinitely longer than the time that I spent with her, and still she is emblazoned in my heart and never going to leave! My heart is still in pieces from that day of our goodbye, nothing about me has

changed!!”

Roswaal steps forth.
Garfiel cuts in to stop Roswaal from approaching Subaru. But Roswaal puts his hand to Garfiel's chest, looks down at him,

Roswaal: “Wasn't it easy? When you spent ten years giving heed to the shouts of love inside you, and through that time believed in them obstinately, didn't you manage to bask in the feeling of loving someone?”

Garfiel: “—! Bastard...”

Roswaal: “It's fine, entirely fine. It's what everybody ought to do. There is no person capable of living in solitude! All live with feelings for another. And that is enough... so then why are you attempting to alter your feelings. Attempting to betray them. Did you not love her!?”

Garfiel: “Yer got it wrong! I...”

Roswaal: “What changed you!? Your muscled body was defeated in a fight, and you lost? You spent ten years for a malleable love, bent by the shattering of your fangs? Then the one disgracing and desecrating your ten years is in fact you yourself!”

Garfiel knocks away the hand at his arm. He attempts to use the backswing to thrust Roswaal back, but Roswaal wrenches himself aside and evades. Garfiel's eyes shoot open as Roswaal grabs his arm and hoists him into the air.

Garfiel: “Hrah—!”

However, once Garfiel hits the peak of the attack, he puts his foot to the ceiling and manages to overpower Roswaal's momentum, saving himself from slamming back-first into the hard surface. He forces his body to flip around, giving him three points of contact minus his grappled arm. He rewards this by yanking his grappled arm, pulling Roswaal closer, and ramming him in the chest with a headbutt.

Roswaal: “Ghuh...”

Garfiel: “*Ha!* 'F I hadn't heard from th'Captain that yer can do martial arts too, yer'd've gotten me good.”

Looking down at Roswaal as he falls to his knees, Garfiel gives a roll of his previously-grappled arm.
He bares his fangs.

Garfiel: “Hey Roswaal. Yer sayin' things that an idiot like me ain't gonna understand. Yer can go on about yer four centuries, but fact is yer a young guy who maybe ain't even thirty. N' I know my amazin' self's sittin' at half'v that.”

Garfiel reaches out to grab Roswaal's collar, hoists the clown close.
Roswaal's face is twisted in pain. Garfiel scrunches his nose.

Garfiel: “But it ain't that my amazin' self's goin' with th'Captain 'cause I lost a fight. 'S true that th'loss did smart. Yer said it, my amazin' stubbornness's been doin' me good fer ten years. My head

ain't mushy enough fer a loss t'turn that around.”

Roswaal: “Then why are you standing in this room...”

Garfiel: “'Cause th'Captain... actually, 's was Ram. Sh'told me this after I lost. T'go into th'tomb n' look at th'TRIAL. N'so, ten years later, I saw what started these ten years'v feelin's.”

Roswaal: “Wha?!”

Shock flashes through Roswaal's expression.

Roswaal: “Impossible... you're, you're not capable of facing your past again!”

Garfiel: “Yer can say 'm not capable all yer want. I already went n' done it, n' saw what I saw. N'so, I wound up understandin'.”

Roswaal glares at Garfiel, who shakes his head. That silent, focused gaze of his is waiting for Garfiel to divulge what he learned.
But, Garfiel merely opens his mouth wide, and,

Garfiel: “I ain't gonna tell yer what I figured out. 'S a waste on you.”

Roswaal: “What!?”

Garfiel: “But I will tell yer one thing, why'm sidin' with th'Captain.”

Garfiel lets Roswaal go, sending him toppling down to a graceless landing on his behind, and looks at Subaru. He sighs slightly as Subaru flinches at the intensity of it.

Garfiel: “'S cause of goddamn course yer'd rather team with th'people sayin' yer strong, we need you, than someone makin' yer think yer gonna stay weak forever.”

With that incredibly reasonable logic, Garfiel looks away from Roswaal. He passes him by, to stand beside Subaru with his arms crossed.
Subaru glances over at him. And away. And over. And away. And—

Garfiel: “What.”

Subaru: “...No, it's nothing. Counting on you.”

Garfiel closes his eyes, looking uncomfortable, when Subaru speaks and then squats down in front of Roswaal. With his neck down and head drooped, he makes no attempt to look at Subaru.

Subaru: “Roswaal.”

Roswaal says nothing.

Subaru: “Garfiel saw his past. That might've changed his viewpoint, but that doesn't mean the feelings he's had for his family for the last ten years weakened or wavered. The strength of the feeling stays the same, but he's changed. You don't find that idea a believable one?”

Though he may no longer be obsessed with Sanctuary, Garfiel's feelings have not weakened in the

least. He learned that his unreciprocated love for his mother was actually mutual, and how great a shock did that give him? Subaru couldn't know.
But who could think that Garfiel was weak, seeing him now? Though he had wavered, and likely would lament.

Subaru: “And it's the same for you. We're not telling you to warp these feelings you've had all this time for someone. We just want you to change how you demonstrate those feelings. If there aren't going to be sacrifices for it, then of course we'll help you.”

Roswaal: “...I cannot tolerate that. And so what does it matter if merely Garfiel's feelings have changed? For our purposes, yet another vital person remains.”

Subaru reaches out to Roswaal. But Roswaal does not attempt to take his hand.
He shakes his head, terrible at surrender, as he speaks about Emilia.

Subaru: “Emilia's not going to do what you want either. She's going to overcome it.”

Roswaal: “She cannot. She'll be crushed by her regrets, regret ever hoping that she could change, and come crying and clinging to you... as suits her.”

Subaru: “Like there's a girl out there whose face's suited to crying. And actually, have you even seen her cry?”

Subaru recalls Emilia in the tomb, before their argument.
She was carrying a heavy responsibility, and grieving the loss of her bond with Puck. Her expression when Subaru glared at her, unable to hold back her tears.
Recalling it lights a fire in his heart.

An unbearable inferno of rage, burning him whole.

Subaru: “I have never seen a woman so fucking horrendous at crying before!”

Roswaal: “To be wounded, to be disparaged, that is the lot of half-elves like her. Sharing the same birth as the WITCH OF ENVY is a congenital curse. It's inevitable that she be despised as a WITCH.”

Subaru: “Fuck off, what about her's a witch? This witch you're talking about doesn't goddamn exist.”

Roswaal faces down.
Subaru grabs his collar and forces him to look up, his eyes pitched in anger as he puts them on even eye level.

Reflected in Roswaal's eyes is Subaru, blazing with an unstoppable fury directed at the world.
Yes. Right now, Natsuki Subaru is sick of everything in the world.

What about Emilia was a WITCH? There wasn't any damn WITCH.
And if there was one, it would be—

Subaru: “If you're saying she's a WITCH! It's because you all made her one! You keep telling her that of course she's weak, it's obvious she'd be hated, all because of her useless birth, and you are going to make her into a WITCH!”

He recalls the WITCH's tea party.
The scenes flash through his mind—of the old witches, titled with sin.

Minerva, Sekhmet, Typhon, Daphne, Camilla, Echidna.
And he remembers Satella, who saw him off the moment the dream shattered.

Like he could forget her.
Her face—was exactly like Emilia's.

Subaru: “Has anyone told her even once!? That when she's sad, when she's suffering, it's okay for her to cry! That if she can't wipe her tears away, someone at her side will do it for her! Has anyone told her even once that someone would be there for her!?”

No matter what horrible things she goes through, she accepts it as natural.
Surely her heart would have been filled with pain, and it would feel like the sadness could crush her.
But nobody had allowed her to cry, making her so terrible at crying.
Over repeated experiences in crying and crying and crying and crying, everyone learns to keep the tears out of their voice, out of their expression, and themselves out of sight.

But she doesn't know that.
She had made it this fare without ever knowing that, and so she was terrible at crying.

A world that would do this, a world that had done this—was presently so loathsome to Subaru that he could go mad.

Subaru: “If the obvious thing in this world is for nobody to take her side, then my presence is going to change it! You think four-hundred year curses can't change, and I'm going to teach you!”

Roswaal: “—”

Roswaal's eyes shoot open as Subaru jabs his finger to the heavens.
By some bizarre turn, his posture right now, and Emilia's pose to the insulting witch, mirror each other perfectly—

Subaru: “My name is Natsuki Subaru! Knight of the silver half-elf, Emilia!”

Once, Natsuki Subaru had crowed the exact same line without any preparation for it, and many mocked his foolhardy determination. Thinking back, he had been even more useless back then than he was now.
But there is one thing different between now and then.

Even if someone laughs at him for it, Natsuki Subaru will feel no embarrassment.

Subaru: “Emilia's doing it, Roswaal. This girl you think's so weak is gonna tear right through the last hope you have left.”

Roswaal: “As if, she can..”

Subaru “The weakness you're clinging to's getting peeled off bit by bit, and all that'll be left'll be to talk to you... I'm trusting that you'll finally start to listen.”

Even after hearing all of this, Roswaal's heart does not yield.

He's exactly right. Something built over four hundred years can't be altered with just a single word.

It's like how Garfiel's decade and Emilia's century required both words and actions to begin moving. Roswaal's four centuries will be the same. The actions and the words of Subaru's group will, finally, affect him.
Is what Subaru wants to believe.

Roswaal: “...Regardless of what anyone may do, my feelings shall not waver.”

Roswaal crawls past Subaru. He reaches out his shaking hand to grab a black book beside the broken bed, and cradles it to his chest.
A legitimate, future-charting GOSPEL.

Garfiel and Emilia have outgrown the weakness that Roswaal believes in.
Omega and Ram have diverted from Roswaal as he attempts to establish his path.

The only HOPE that remains for Roswaal now is the gospel.
Once he has lost its writ, Subaru will be able to speak with Roswaal genuinely for the first time.

Roswaal: “I'll, make it snow...”

Subaru: “Do what you want. I'm crushing all your plans and crushing them unremittingly.”

With that reply to Roswaal's nigh delirious muttering, Subaru turns to exit the room. He nods at Garfiel, who seems to want to say something, and the two leave the room together.
At the very end, Garfiel glances back to the room with Roswaal in it. And, perhaps seeing something in him as he is left behind, whispers:

Garfiel: “Y'damn idiot.”

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Their conversation with Roswaal over, Subaru exits the building and gives a sigh.
A deep one, wringing all of the air out of his lungs, expelling everything in him.

Subaru: “Crap. We were trying to make him stop the attack on the mansion, but it feels like we just cornered him into doing it.”

Garfiel: “Started talkin' some nonsense crap 'bout makin' it snow, too. Didn't look like we were gonna get a real conversation outta him... it ain't yer fault, Captain.”

Subaru: “No, I totally cornered him when we didn't need to. Even though I knew the second we went in that Roswaal wasn't exactly in a normal state of mind, what the heck was I doing?”

Subaru feels like he finally understands Roswaal's principles and motives in earnest. And Subaru has clearly given his response and feelings regarding them.
He did think it necessary to inform Roswaal that Emilia was going to clear the victory conditions, so that he would acknowledge his loss.
But—

Subaru: “Doing that meant we lost out on the most important point...”

Garfiel: “'M tellin' yer, don't get down 'bout it. Ain't like my amazin' self got curious listenin' from aside wonderin' what yer were gonna do, but what yer said ain't anythin' incorrect.”

Subaru: “I mean, that's the idea...”

Garfiel: “But anyway... that pose was so cool!”

Giving Subaru a smile, Garfiel promptly jabs his finger to the heavens.
Honestly, the pose has only ever gotten terribly negative reviews since coming to this world, so finding someone who can empathise with it is the peak of happiness.
It's Garfiel's way of comforting Subaru. Probably. Hopefully.

???: “—Natsuki-san! Garfiel!”

When somebody calls to the two.
They glance over, to see Otto running toward them. He had been doing something else, and comes to a stop before them.

Otto: “It looks like you're done speaking with the Margrave. How did everything go?”

Subaru: “Yeah. Got him to pick up the fight we put down.”

Otto: “Was that what we were attempting to do here!?”

What they were actually meant to talk about was the final trap that Roswaal set in SANCTUARY, and try to make him change his mind about it.
They found out about Omega's presence on the way to Roswaal's, and Roswaal is too thick-headed to change his mind about anything. Negotiations have failed.

Garfiel: “Hey, guy. Don't get on th'Captain's case too much. He did this super fiery awesome backtalk. Put me in a good mood hearin' it.”

Otto: “Do you remember what you went there to do? This truly isn't a joke.”

Unable to refute Otto's complaints, Subaru reaches the peak of guilty reflection.
But Garfiel gives the dejected Subaru a boisterous slap on the shoulders, and raps his finger off a dissatisfied Otto's forehead. He watches as Otto yelps, pitching back, and squats down to the ground.

Garfiel: “Yer right, th'talk didn't go great. But all that was a back-up plan anyway. —I'll be doin' somethin' bout th'trouble at Roswaal's mansion.”

Garfiel guffaws in reply to Otto's silent criticism.
He bares his fangs, and with a loud click,

Garfiel: “Leave everythin' t'my amazin' self. —I am th'goddamn strongest.”

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Ram: “And so the three idiots and one clever dragon have departed by carriage for the mansion.”

Done with the story, Ram puts her hand to her chest with her expression rather exhausted.
It's a rare thing for Ram to display emotion when around Emilia, and surprises her a little.

Emilia: “I see then. ...Well, I guess they had to.”

Ram: “...Is that all?”

Emilia: “That's all. I mean, I am still a little... sooo just a little miffed that they weren't waiting for me.”

All those talks, and they're not even around to see how she did. What's with that.

Emilia: “But it means they don't think I'm going to fail.”

If Subaru really was more worried about Emilia than anything else, then he would've stayed behind.
His absence here means that somewhere else, there is someone who needs his help more than her.

Since Emilia knows that Natsuki Subaru trusts in her, that's how it seems.

Emilia: “I wonder if he really does love me. What do you think?”

Ram: “Barusu has more feelings for you than he does for anyone else, Emilia-sama.”

Emilia: “...Huhuhu, thank you.”

Emilia puts her hand to her mouth and smiles, for Ram to lower her gaze in thought.
After a few seconds of silence, she looks up again.

Ram: “Emilia-sama, I must apologize.”

Emilia: “What's wrong?”

Emilia's eyes widen.

Emilia: “It's sooo uncommon for you to apologize.”

Ram: “I think the same. ...However, now is the first time that I bow my head to you sincerely.”

All of my curtseys up until now have just been poses, announces Ram. Emilia smiles wryly, while Ram looks her straight in the eye.

Ram: “I... did not believe that you would come to stand. The TRIAL had broken your spirit, you lost the Great Spirit who was your support... you even learned that Barusu had been keeping secrets from you. I did not think for a second that you would rise to your feet.”

Emilia says nothing.

Ram: “However, even with all that has occurred, you have not yielded. When you left your bed, and I realised that you had gone to the tomb... I at least recognized that I had been discrediting you.”

But even so, Emilia hadn't gotten back to her feet at this juncture that Ram is indicating.
She just hadn't tried to abandon the TRIAL. That alone was something that she never considered. She could assert that.

Emilia: “And so you helped Subaru and Otto-kun?”

Ram: “I merely believed that my assistance would lead to a future worth seeing. It would be wrong to perceive it as myself assisting them. The person I had been assisting was you.”

Emilia: “...You might be right.”

Subaru's words were indispensable for Emilia to get back to her feet.
And Subaru's defeat of Garfiel was necessary to prove those words. And defeating Garfiel required Otto and Ram's help.
Looking only at the results, you could say that Ram aided Emilia.

Emilia: “Why did you do that for me?”

Ram: “—Because it is essential to demonstrate your own sincerity before making a request.”

Emilia: “—”

With that, Ram kneels before Emilia.
Whenever Ram demonstrated politeness around Emilia up to now, however insincere the sentiment may have been, it was always by grasping her skirt and preforming a curtsey. Something within the scope of a maid's duties.
But this time is different. This is the ultimate demonstration of politeness, where anyone living in this world illustrates all the respect that they have.

Ram: “I ask of you, Emilia-sama. —Please save my master, Roswaal-sama.”

Emilia: “...Save Roswaal?”

Ram: “He is preoccupied with delusion. A curse of a delusion, which has kept his heart bound for a long, long time. Perhaps I would have been happy even with that. Even should he never cast his gaze upon me, and never regard me as more than a tool to accomplish that delusion, I would have been happy.”

Still kneeling, Ram bares her heart to Emilia.
Beneath her expressionless mask, she may have been holding this wish the entire time.

Ram: “However, his delusion is no longer capable of taking form. The world has diverged from the writ of the gospel, the basis for everything, and Roswaal-sama now clings merely to letters... I request that you may destroy it.”

Emilia: “Will Roswaal be okay if that's destroyed?”

Ram: “I doubt so. He will likely be thrown into disarray. He may lose sight of his life's meaning and suffer breakdown. But you are the only one, Emilia-sama. Who might be able to grant Roswaal-sama's delusion... his feelings, in a world diverged from the gospel's writ.”

Her head bowed, Ram pleads Emilia.
Half of her speech is failing to communicate clearly to Emilia.

Roswaal's gospel probably means that black book that he showed her. He had also mentioned that the world was diverging from its text.
What would Roswaal do in a world different from what the book said? How could Emilia do anything to do something about the hopes of a hopeless Roswaal?

Emilia: “What do I have to do?”

Ram: “—I ask for you to ascend to the throne.”

Emilia: “—”

Ram: “For you to be seated upon the throne of Lugnica. Once you achieve this, Roswaal-sama's feelings will be fulfilled. Please teach Roswaal-sama that the day will come where his love is realised. Give him reason to live for today, and for tomorrow.”

This is the first time Emilia has ever seen Ram so talkative.

And so.
And so...

This emotion flooding up in Emilia's heart, indescribable, is...?
These feelings, unstoppable, as someone who had thought her useless requests her aid, are...?

Ram raises her head.
The great love filling every inch of her small form glistens wet in her cerise eyes.

Ram:
“Please, Emilia-sama. —Help him.”

The quiet words make Emilia shiver.
It feels like a shock to her bloodstream, enough to imagine that a hand is jolting her heart once, twice.

After the shiver races through her body, only one thing remains inside Emilia.
Blazing hot in her heart, solely a sense of duty.

Emilia: “I honestly don't know how me being Ruler will save Roswaal.”

Ram: “...”

Emilia: “And I don't think I can truly understand what your feelings are, either.”

Ram: “...”

Emilia: “But.”

Returning Ram's silent gaze, Emilia takes a breath.
Hesitation is gone from her heart. Anxiety is gone from her mind.

Her soul blazes hotter than ever before.

Emilia: “This is the first time you've ever requested anything from me.”

And so,

Emilia: “I'll do it, Ram. You believe in me, and I want to answer to that.”

In this instant, the things that Emilia ought to do and wants to do overlap so perfectly that there is no need to deliberate. She says with a smile:

Emilia: “And that's definitely something I'll need to start, right here.”